

**TOP SECRET SENSITIVE**

**EXCLUSIVE EYES ONLY**

DOS Review Completed.

**TOP SECRET SENSITIVE EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY** 150012Z NOV 72  
VIA BUNKER CHANNELS

**DELIVER IMMEDIATELY UPON RECEIPT**

**TO: AMBASSADOR BUNKER**  
**FROM: HENRY KISSINGER**  
**CITE: WHS2247**

**NOVEMBER 14, 1972**

**ATTACHED IS THE LETTER FROM PRESIDENT NIXON TO PRESIDENT THIEU WHICH GENERAL HAIG SPOKE TO YOU ABOUT ON THE TELEPHONE THIS MORNING SAIGON TIME.**

**WARM REGARDS.**

**ATTACHMENT**

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

**DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:**

**I WAS PLEASED TO LEARN FROM GENERAL HAIG THAT YOU HELD USEFUL AND CONSTRUCTIVE DISCUSSIONS WITH HIM IN SAIGON IN PREPARATION FOR DR. KISSINGER'S FORTHCOMING MEETING WITH NORTH VIETNAM'S NEGOTIATORS IN PARIS.**

**AFTER STUDYING YOUR LETTER OF NOVEMBER 11 WITH GREAT CARE I HAVE CONCLUDED THAT WE HAVE MADE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS TOWARDS REACHING A COMMON UNDERSTANDING ON MANY OF THE IMPORTANT ISSUES BEFORE US. YOU CAN BE SURE THAT WE WILL PURSUE THE PROPOSED CHANGES IN THE DRAFT AGREEMENT THAT GENERAL HAIG DISCUSSED WITH YOU WITH THE UTMOST FIRMINess AND THAT, AS THESE DISCUSSIONS PROCEED, WE SHALL KEEP YOU FULLY INFORMED THROUGH YOUR AMBASSADOR TO THE PARIS CONFERENCE ON VIETNAM WHO WILL BE BRIEFED DAILY BY DR. KISSINGER.**

**I UNDERSTAND FROM YOUR LETTER AND FROM GENERAL HAIG'S PERSONAL REPORT THAT YOUR PRINCIPLE REMAINING CONCERN WITH RESPECT TO THE DRAFT AGREEMENT IS THE STATUS OF NORTH VIETNAMESE FORCES NOW IN SOUTH VIETNAM. AS GENERAL HAIG EXPLAINED TO YOU, IT IS OUR INTENTION TO DEAL WITH THIS PROBLEM FIRST BY SEEKING TO INSERT A REFERENCE TO RESPECT FOR THE DEMILITARIZED ZONE IN THE PROPOSED AGREEMENT AND, SECOND, BY PROPOSING A CLAUSE WHICH PROVIDES FOR THE REDUCTION AND DEMOBILIZATION OF FORCES ON BOTH SIDES IN SOUTH VIETNAM ON A ONE-TO-ONE BASIS AND TO HAVE DEMOBILIZED PERSONNEL RETURN TO THEIR HOMES.**

UPON REVIEWING THIS PROPOSED LANGUAGE, IT IS MY CONVICTION THAT SUCH A PROVISION CAN GO A LONG WAY TOWARDS DEALING WITH YOUR CONCERN WITH RESPECT TO NORTH VIETNAMESE FORCES. GENERAL HAIG TELLS ME, HOWEVER, THAT YOU ARE ALSO SERIOUSLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE TIMING AND VERIFICATION OF SUCH REDUCTIONS. IN LIGHT OF THIS, I HAVE ASKED DR. KISSINGER TO CONVEY TO YOU, THROUGH AMBASSADOR BUNKER, SOME ADDITIONAL CLAUSES WE WOULD PROPOSE ADDING TO THE AGREEMENT DEALING WITH EACH OF THESE POINTS. IN ADDITION, I HAVE ASKED THAT DR. KISSINGER SEND YOU THE OTHER TECHNICAL AND LESS IMPORTANT SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES WHICH GENERAL HAIG DID NOT HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS WITH YOU BECAUSE THEY HAD NOT YET BEEN FULLY DEVELOPED IN WASHINGTON. WITH THESE PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS, I THINK YOU WILL AGREE THAT WE HAVE DONE EVERYTHING WE CAN TO IMPROVE THE EXISTING DRAFT WHILE REMAINING WITHIN ITS GENERAL FRAMEWORK.

YOU ALSO RAISE IN YOUR LETTER THE QUESTION OF PARTICIPATION BY OTHER ASIAN COUNTRIES IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE. AS YOU KNOW, THE PRESENTLY CONTEMPLATED COMPOSITION ARE THE PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL, THE MEMBERS OF THE ICCS, THE PARTIES TO THE PARIS CONFERENCE ON VIETNAM AND THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS. WE SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED CAMBODIAN AND LAOTIAN PARTICIPATION BUT DECIDED THAT THESE WOULD BE UNNECESSARY COMPLICATIONS WITH RESPECT TO REPRESENTATION. WE DO NOT, HOWEVER, EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY OF DELEGATIONS FROM THESE COUNTRIES PARTICIPATING IN AN OBSERVER STATUS AT THE INVITATION OF THE CONFERENCE. AS FOR JAPAN, THIS QUESTION WAS RAISED EARLIER IN OUR NEGOTIATIONS WITH HANOI AND SET ASIDE BECAUSE OF THEIR STRENUOUS OBJECTIONS TO ANY JAPANESE ROLE IN GUARANTEEING THE SETTLEMENT AND ALSO BECAUSE IT INEVITABLY RAISES THE POSSIBILITY OF INDIAN PARTICIPATION. I HAVE, HOWEVER, ASKED THAT DR. KISSINGER RAISE THIS MATTER AGAIN IN PARIS AND HE WILL INFORM YOUR REPRESENTATIVE WHAT PROGRESS WE MAKE ON THIS. WHAT WE MUST RECOGNIZE AS A PRACTICAL MATTER IS THAT PARTICIPATION OF JAPAN IS VERY LIKELY TO LEAD TO THE PARTICIPATION OF INDIA. WE WOULD APPRECIATE HEARING YOUR PREFERENCE ON WHETHER IT IS BETTER TO INCLUDE BOTH COUNTRIES OR NEITHER OF THEM.

FINALLY, IN RESPECT TO THE COMPOSITION OF THE ICCS, I MUST SAY IN ALL CANDOR THAT I DO NOT SHARE YOUR VIEW THAT ITS COMTEMPLATED MEMBERSHIP IS UNBALANCED. I AM HOPEFUL THAT IT WILL PROVE TO BE A USEFUL MECHANISM IN DETECTING AND REPORTING VIOLATIONS OF THE AGREEMENT. IN ANY EVENT, WHAT WE BOTH MUST RECOGNIZE IS THAT THE SUPERVISORY MECHANISM IN ITSELF IS IN NO MEASURE AS IMPORTANT AS OUR OWN FIRM DETERMINATION TO SEE TO IT THAT THE AGREEMENT WORKS AND OUR VIGILANCE WITH RESPECT TO THE PROSPECT OF ITS VIOLATION.

I WILL NOT REPEAT HERE ALL THAT I SAID TO YOU IN MY LETTER OF NOVEMBER 8, BUT I DO WISH TO REAFFIRM ITS ESSENTIAL CONTENT AND STRESS AGAIN MY DETERMINATION TO WORK TOWARDS AN EARLY AGREEMENT ALONG THE LINES OF THE SCHEDULE WHICH GENERAL HAIG EXPLAINED TO YOU. I MUST EXPLAIN IN ALL FRANKNESS THAT WHILE WE WILL DO OUR VERY BEST TO SECURE THE CHANGES IN THE AGREEMENT WHICH GENERAL HAIG DISCUSSED WITH YOU AND THOSE ADDITIONAL ONES WHICH AMBASSADOR BUNKER WILL BRING YOU, WE CANNOT EXPECT TO SECURE THEM ALL. FOR EXAMPLE, IT IS UNREALISTIC TO ASSUME THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO SECURE THE ABSOLUTE ASSURANCES WHICH YOU WOULD HOPE TO HAVE ON THE TROOP ISSUE.

BUT FAR MORE IMPORTANT THAN WHAT WE SAY IN THE AGREEMENT ON THIS ISSUE IS WHAT WE DO IN THE EVENT THE ENEMY RENEWS ITS AGGRESSION. YOU HAVE MY ABSOLUTE ASSURANCE THAT IF HANOI FAILS TO ABIDE BY THE TERMS OF THIS AGREEMENT IT IS MY INTENTION TO TAKE SWIFT AND SEVERE RETALIATORY ACTION.

I BELIEVE THE EXISTING AGREEMENT TO BE AN ESSENTIALLY SOUND ONE WHICH SHOULD BECOME EVEN MORE SO IF WE SUCCEED IN OBTAINING SOME OF THE CHANGES WE HAVE DISCUSSED. OUR BEST ASSURANCE OF SUCCESS IS TO MOVE INTO THIS NEW SITUATION WITH CONFIDENCE AND COOPERATION.

WITH THIS ATTITUDE AND THE INHERENT STRENGTH OF YOUR GOVERNMENT AND ARMY ON THE GROUND IN SOUTH VIETNAM, I AM CONFIDENT THIS AGREEMENT WILL BE A SUCCESSFUL ONE.

IF, ON THE OTHER HAND, WE ARE UNABLE TO AGREE ON THE COURSE THAT I HAVE OUTLINED, IT IS DIFFICULT FOR ME TO SEE HOW WE WILL BE ABLE TO CONTINUE OUR COMMON EFFORT TOWARDS SECURING A JUST AND HONORABLE PEACE. AS GENERAL HAIG TOLD YOU I WOULD WITH GREAT RELUCTANCE BE FORCED TO CONSIDER OTHER ALTERNATIVES. FOR THIS REASON, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE HAVE YOUR AGREEMENT AS WE PROCEED INTO OUR NEXT MEETING WITH HANOI'S NEGOTIATORS. AND I STRONGLY URGE YOU AND YOUR ADVISORS TO WORK PROMPTLY WITH AMBASSADOR BUNKER AND OUR MISSION IN SAIGON ON THE MANY PRACTICAL PROBLEMS WHICH WILL FACE US IN IMPLEMENTING THE AGREEMENT. I CANNOT OVEREMPHASIZE THE URGENCY OF THE TASK AT HAND NOR MY UNALTERABLE DETERMINATION TO PROCEED ALONG THE COURSE WHICH WE HAVE OUTLINED.

ABOVE ALL WE MUST BEAR IN MIND WHAT WILL REALLY MAINTAIN THE AGREEMENT. IT IS NOT ANY PARTICULAR CLAUSE IN THE AGREEMENT BUT OUR JOINT WILLINGNESS TO MAINTAIN ITS CLAUSES. I REPEAT MY PERSONAL ASSURANCES TO YOU THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL REACT VERY STRONGLY AND RAPIDLY TO ANY VIOLATION OF THE AGREEMENT. BUT IN ORDER TO DO THIS EFFECTIVELY IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT I HAVE PUBLIC SUPPORT AND THAT YOUR GOVERNMENT DOES NOT EMERGE AS THE OBSTACLE TO A PEACE WHICH AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION NOW UNIVERSALLY DESIRES. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT I AM PRESSING FOR THE ACCEPTANCE OF AN AGREEMENT WHICH I AM CONVINCED IS HONORABLE AND FAIR AND WHICH CAN BE MADE ESSENTIALLY SECURE BY OUR JOINT DETERMINATION.

MRS. NIXON JOINS ME IN EXTENDING OUR WARMEST PERSONAL REGARDS TO MADAME THIEU AND TO YOU. WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AGAIN AT OUR HOME IN CALIFORNIA ONCE THE JUST PEACE WE HAVE BOTH FOUGHT FOR SO LONG IS FINALLY ACHIEVED.

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TOP SECRET SENSITIVE EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY

ZOO 13/1445Z NOVEMBER 1972

HAIG TO 16

FOR KISSINGER

FROM HAIG

SUBJECT: DRAFT LETTER TO PRESIDENT THIEU

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT

GENERAL HAIG HAS CONVEYED TO ME YOUR LETTER OF NOVEMBER 11. I WAS PLEASED TO LEARN FROM HIM THAT YOU HELD USEFUL AND CONSTRUCTIVE DISCUSSIONS WITH HIM IN SAIGON IN PREPARATION FOR DR KISSINGERS FORTHCOMING MEETING WITH NORTH VIETNAMS NEGOTIATORS IN PARIS.

I HAVE STUDIED YOUR LETTER WITH CARE AND IT SEEMS TO ME THAT WE HAVE MADE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS TOWARDS REACHING A COMMON UNDERSTANDING ON VIRTUALLY ALL THE IMPORTANT ISSUES BEFORE US. YOU CAN BE CERTAIN THAT WE WILL PURSUE THE PROPOSED CHANGES IN THE DRAFT AGREEMENT THAT GENERAL HAIG DISCUSSED WITH YOU WITH THE UTMOST OF FIRMNESS AND THAT, AS THESE DISCUSSIONS PROCEED, IT IS OUR INTENTION TO KEEP YOU FULLY INFORMED THROUGH YOUR AMBASSADOR TO THE PARIS CONFERENCE ON VIETNAM.

I UNDERSTAND FROM YOUR LETTER AND FROM GENERAL HAIG'S PERSONAL REPORT THAT YOUR PRINCIPAL REMAINING CONCERN WITH

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**PAGE TWO**

RESPECT TO THE DRAFT AGREEMENT IS THE STATUS OF NORTH VIETNAMESE FORCES NOW IN SOUTH VIETNAM. AS GENERAL HAIG EXPLAINED TO YOU, IT IS OUR INTENTION TO DEAL WITH THIS PROBLEM FIRST BY SEEKING TO INSERT A REFERENCE TO RESPECT FOR THE DEMILITARIZED ZONE IN THE PROPOSED AGREEMENT AND, SECOND, BY PROPOSING A CLAUSE WHICH PROVIDES FOR THE REDUCTION AND DEMOBILIZATION OF FORCES ON BOTH SIDES IN SOUTH VIETNAM ON A ONE-TO-ONE BASIS SO THAT THOSE FORCES RETURN TO THEIR HOMES.

UPON REVIEWING THIS PROPOSED LANGUAGE, IT IS MY CONVICTION THAT SUCH A PROVISION CAN GO A LONG WAY TOWARDS DEALING WITH YOUR CONCERN WITH RESPECT TO NORTH VIETNAMESE FORCES. GENERAL HAIG TELLS ME, HOWEVER THAT YOU ARE ALSO SERIOUSLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE TIMING OF SUCH TROOPS REDUCTIONS, THE VERIFICATION OF THE FACT THAT SUCH TROOPS RETURN TO THEIR HOMES AND VERIFICATION WITH RESPECT TO THE DISPOSITION OF THEIR WEAPONS. IN LIGHT OF THIS, I HAVE ASKED DR KISSINGER TO CONVEY TO YOU, THROUGH AMBASSADOR BUNKER, SOME ADDITIONAL CLAUSES WE WOULD PROPOSE ADDING TO THE AGREEMENT DEALING WITH EACH OF THESE POINTS. IN ADDITION, I HAVE ASKED THAT DR KISSINGER SEND YOU THE OTHER TECHNICAL AND LESS IMPORTANT

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PAGE THREE

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES WHICH GENERAL HAIG DID NOT HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS WITH YOU BECAUSE THEY HAD NOT YET BEEN FULLY DEVELOPED IN WASHINGTON. WITH THESE PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS, I THINK YOU WILL AGREE THAT WE HAVE DONE THE MOST POSSIBLE TO IMPROVE THE EXISTING DRAFT WHILE REMAINING WITHIN ITS GENERAL FRAMEWORK.

YOU ALSO RAISE IN YOUR LETTER THE QUESTION OF PARTICIPATION BY OTHER ASAIN COUNTRIES IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE. AS YOU KNOW, HE PRESENTLY CONTEMPLATED COMPOSITION ARE THE PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL, THE MEMBERS OF THE ICCS, THE PARTIES TO THE PARIS CONFERENCE ON VIETNAM AD THE SECRETARIES GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS. THE MATTER OF CAMBODIAN AND LAOTIAN PARTICIPATION WAS DISCARDED BECAUSE OF THE UNNECESSARY COMPLICATIONS WHICH COULD ARISE IN RESPECT TO REPRESENTATION. WE DO NOT, HOWEVER, EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY OF DELEGATIONS FROM THESE COUNTRIES PARTICIPATING IN AN OBSERVER STATUS AT THE INVITATION OF THE CONFERENCE. AS FOR JAPAN, THIS QUESTION WAS RAISED EARLIER IN OUR NEGOTIATIONS WITH HANOI AND SET ASIDE BECAUSE OF THEIR STRENUOUS OBJECTIONS TO ANY JAPANESE ROLE IN GUARANTEEING THE SETTLEMENT. I HAVE

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PAGE FOUR

HOWEVER, ASKED THAT DR KISSINGER RAISE THIS MATTER AGAIN IN PARIS AND HE WILL INFORM YOUR REPRESENTATIVE WHAT PROGRESS, IF ANY, WE MAKE ON THIS

FINALLY, IN RESPECT TO THE COMPOSITION OF THE ICCS, WE DO NOT SHARE YOUR VIEW THAT ITS CONTEMPLATED MEMBERSHIP IS UNBALANCED AND I AM HOPEFUL THAT IT WILL PROVE TO BE A USEFUL MECHANISM IN DETECTING AND REPORTING VIOLATIONS OF THE AGREEMENT. HOWEVER, I AM SURE THAT YOU SHARE MY VIEW THAT THE SUPERVISORY MECHANISM IN ITSELF IS IN NO MEASURE AS IMPORTANT AS OUR OWN DETERMINATION TO SEE TO IT THAT THE AGREEMENT WORKS AND OUR VIGILANCE WITH RESPECT TO THE PROSPECT OF ITS VIOLATION.

IN CLOSING, I WILL NOT REPEAT HERE ALL THAT I SAID TO YOU IN MY LETTER OF NOVEMBER 8. BUT I DO WISH TO REAFFIRM ITS ESSENTIAL CONTENT AND STRESS AGAIN OUR DETERMINATION TO WORK TOWARDS AN EARLY AGREEMENT ALONG THE LINES OF THE SCHEDULE WHICH GENERAL HAIG EXPLAINED TO YOU. I MUST EXPLAIN IN ALL FRANKNESS THAT WHILE WE WILL DO OUR BEST TO SECURE THE CHANGES IN THE AGREEMENT WHICH GENERAL HAIG DISCUSSED WITH YOU AND THOSE ADDITIONAL ONES WHICH AMBASSADOR BUNKER WILL BRING YOU,

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PAGE FIVE

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WE CANNOT NECESSARILY EXPECT TO SECURE THEM ALL. YOU MUST ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT IN ANY EVENT WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO SECURE THE TOTALLY UNAMBIGUOUS ASSURANCES WHICH YOU WOULD HOPE TO HAVE.

I REPEAT, HOWEVER, THAT I BELIEVE THE EXISTING AGREEMENT TO BE AN EXTREMELY SOUND ONE WHICH SHOULD BECOME EVEN MORE SO IF WE SUCCEED IN OBTAINING SOME OR ALL OF THE CHANGES WE HAVE DISCUSSED. OUR BEST ASSURANCE OF SUCCESS IS TO MOVE INTO THIS NEW SITUATION WITH CONFIDENCE AND COOPERATION. YOU HAVE MY FIRMEST ASSURANCE THAT IF HANOI FAILS TO ABIDE BY THE TERMS OF THIS AGREEMENT IT IS THE INTENTION OF MY GOVERNMENT TO TAKE SWIFT AND SEVERE RETALIATORY ACTION. WITH THIS ATTITUDE AND THE INHERENT STRENGTH OF YOUR GOVERNMENT AND ARMY ON THE GROUND IN SOUTH VIETNAM, I AM CONFIDENT THIS AGREEMENT WILL BE A SUCCESSFUL ONE.

IF, ON THE OTHER HAND, WE ARE UNABLE TO AGREE ON THE COURSE THAT I HAVE OUTLINED, IT IS DIFFICULT FOR ME TO SEE HOW WE WILL BE ABLE TO CONTINUE OUR COMMON EFFORT TOWARDS PEACE AND WE WILL BE COMPELLED TO URGENTLY CONSIDER OTHER ALTERNATIVES. FOR THIS REASON, WE MUST HAVE YOUR AGREEMENT AS WE PROCEED INTO OUR NEXT MEETING WITH HANOI NEGOTIATORS

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**PAGE SIX**

AND I MUST URGE YOU AND YOUR ADVISORS TO WORK PROMPTLY WITH  
AMBASSADOR BUNKER AD OUR MISSION IN SAIGON ON THE MANY  
PRACTICAL PROBLEMS WHICH WILL FACE US IN IMPLEMENTING THE  
AGGREEMENT. I CANNOT OVEREMPHASIZE THE URGENCY OF THE TASK  
AT HAND.

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**NEGOTIATIONS IN PARIS.**